

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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(54) BIRD EXERCISING DEVICE

(71) I, JOHN ORR, a British Subject, of 78, Melton Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham do hereby declare the invention, for which I pray that a patent may be granted to me, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to a bird exercising device and is concerned particularly with exercising racing pigeons. Such pigeons are often released a considerable distance from their home in order to force them to exercise by returning to their home. This method is inconvenient and exposes the birds to hazards. It is an object of the present invention to provide a device which encourages the birds to exercise and avoids the above disadvantages.

In accordance with this invention, a bird exercising device comprises a container for food, a feeding surface arranged to receive food from the container, control means for controlling passage of food from the container to the feeding surface, a movably mounted perch arranged so that a bird of a predetermined size on the perch can reach the feeding surface, the control means being responsive to movement of the perch caused by the bird so that food is passed from the container to the feeding surface, and means to unbalance the bird which is on the perch in the feeding position.

The means to unbalance the bird may be a shield provided between the perch and the feeding table and having an aperture permitting feeding access to the feeding table for the bird on the perch, the shield being positioned to unbalance the bird on the perch. The bird will therefore retain its position by use of its wings and will be able to remain on the perch for only a short period. Further, the arrangement may be such that only a few grains of feed are supplied on each movement of the perch so that the bird is caused to return to the device many times.

In one arrangement, the perch is movable between first and second limit positions and is biased against the effect of the weight of the bird on the perch into a first of said limit positions, and the control means is

responsive to movement of the perch under said bias to effect passage of food from the container to the feeding surface. The control means is mechanically actuated by the perch and the perch may conveniently be mounted on a lever which may be gravitationally biased to a position wherein the perch occupies said first limit position the lever having connection with the control means.

In one arrangement, the container has an aperture for feed of food from the container to the feeding table, the control means includes a member which is movable by the perch and which is positioned to disturb the food in the container so as to effect discharge of some of the food. The member may effect such disturbance during movement of the perch both under the bias and under the weight of the bird acting against the bias. It is envisaged that the member could take the form of a piston engaged in a cylinder having an inlet from the container, the piston being reciprocable by the movement of the perch positively to eject food from the cylinder.

It is also envisaged that a measuring chamber could be utilised for discharging the food gravitationally, a pair of closure members being mounted on a common element movable with the perch, the closure members being arranged so that one member closes an outlet from the chamber whilst the inlet is open so that the chamber receives food from the container, and the other member closes the inlet to the chamber whilst the outlet is open.

The presently preferred embodiment of the invention is described with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:—

Figure 1 is a sectional elevation of a device according to the invention, showing a perch in a first limit position; and

Figure 2 is a fragmentary sectional elevation similar to that of Figure 1, but showing the perch in a second limit position, a pigeon being illustrated to show operation of the device.

Referring to the drawings, the device shown comprises a frame 10 including a 100

hopper 11, the hopper having a ramp surface 12 leading towards an aperture 13 in a side wall 15 of the hopper. The hopper contains, in use, seeds 14 which may be for

example cereal grains or beans.

The frame 10 also includes a front wall 17 defining a shield 18 which extends downwardly from the top of the hopper 11 in front of the aperture 13. A table 19 is mounted on the shield below the aperture 13 and a chute 20 leads any seed, passing through the aperture 13 from the hopper 11, to the table 19. The shield has an open window 22 above the table, so that, as described hereafter, a bird may stretch its neck through the window to reach seed dispensed from the hopper to the table 19.

The ramp surface 12 is connected to a horizontal wall 24 below the hopper between a rear wall 23 of the frame 10 and the table 19.

A bore 24A extends through the wall 24 adjacent the table 19, the bore extending vertically, beneath the aperture 13, and communicating with the interior of the hopper 11. A cylindrical agitator 25 in the form of a piston is reciprocably, slidably engaged in the bore 24.

A lever 26 is fulcrummed on the front wall 17 by means of a hinge 29 fastened to the bottom of the table 19 and to the lever 26. The lever extends through a hole 27 in the front wall 17 and the agitator 25 seats on a rounded projection 28 of the lever. At its end projecting externally of the device through the hole 27, the lever defines a perch 26A.

The arrangement is such that the lever is biased under its own weight to the position shown in Figure 1 wherein the lever abuts against the top wall of the hole 27.

In use, the hopper is filled with seeds 14, the arrangement being such and the aperture 13 being sized so that the particular seeds will jam in the vicinity of the aperture 13 so that seeds do not pass through the aperture 13 onto the table 19 unless the seeds are first agitated within the hopper.

A pigeon landing on the perch 26A is able to reach any seeds on the table by putting its head through the window 22 in the shield 18. The shield serves to keep the pigeon out of balance, so that the bird is obliged to use its wings to hold itself in position on the perch. The weight of the bird on the perch tends to tilt the lever 26 against its bias so that the agitator 25 is urged upwardly to cause a small quantity of the seeds to pass through the aperture 13 onto the table 19 (as shown in Figure 2). After taking these seeds, a pigeon would leave the perch, due to the difficulty of remaining in this position and the bias then returns the lever to its position as shown in Figure 1 and the agitator returns

under its own weight. This return movement of the agitator causes more seeds to fall through the aperture on the table. It has been found that after a pigeon has left the perch it cannot turn sufficiently quickly to regain the perch, before another bird has taken its place. Eventually, a rota system is therefore evolved between the birds. It is clear that where a large number of birds are involved, they will exercise for a considerable time, since no means would be provided in the vicinity of the device to permit the birds to rest.

It is envisaged that the table may be defined by a resonant surface, such as provided by a drum, so that the birds are attracted to the device by the sound of seeds falling onto the surface from the aperture. This sound will occur each time a bird leaves the perch.

WHAT I CLAIM IS:—

1. A bird exercising device comprising a container for food, a feeding surface arranged to receive food from the container, control means for controlling passage of food from the container to the feeding surface, a movably mounted perch arranged so that a bird of a predetermined size on the perch can reach the feeding surface, the control means being responsive to movement of the perch caused by the bird so that food is passed from the container to the feeding surface, and means to unbalance the bird which is on the perch in the feeding position.

2. A bird exercising device according to Claim 1 wherein the means to unbalance the bird on the perch includes a shield provided between the perch and the feeding table and having an aperture permitting feeding access to the feeding table for the bird on the perch, the shield being positioned to unbalance the bird on the perch.

3. A bird exercising device according to Claim 1 or 2 wherein the shield is fixed relative to the container.

4. A bird exercising device according to any preceding claim, including a feed outlet from the container, the control means including a gate normally biased to an open position, the gate being movable to close the outlet under the influence of the weight of the bird on the perch and simultaneously to effect agitation of food in the container, the arrangement being such that feed only flows through the outlet during agitation.

5. A bird exercising device according to Claim 4, wherein the perch is secured to, or forms part of, a lever arranged to actuate the gate.

6. A bird exercising device according to Claim 5, wherein the lever and the gate are gravitationally biased to positions wherein the outlet is open.

7. A bird exercising device according to

Claim 4, 5, or 6, wherein the gate is slidably mounted for movement to open and close the outlet.

5 8. A bird exercising device constructed substantially as herein described and illu-

strated in the accompanying drawings.

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